

ANNUAL REPORT

Hunter Volleyball Inc (2000657)

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

The Hunter Volleyball committee started 2020 with an exciting calendar of programming ahead of it, featuring new junior participation programs, and a reinvigorated approach to a representative program for seniors and juniors. We committed to a year which focused on governance, more communication with members, automating bookkeeping, and hosting a regular schedule of meetings which would be constant touch points for sharing the load and operating sustainably.

Then, COVID changed everything for everyone.

To say that the community responded amazingly is an understatement. Faced with uncertainty for employment, a new level of disconnection, and mental and physical challenges, we found ways to cope with change, and then manage ourselves to continue being productive, active, and to reconnect. Members stood up and contributed through social media engagement - the COVID Isolation Challenge and beach drills - were highlights.

When programming stopped in March, it meant that there was renewed focus on our "back of house" work, making time to develop and deliver at an accelerated speed. Registering as an endorsed Active Kids Provider for junior program subsidies, and actively seeking out grant opportunities meant that we could increase the range of income sources and maintain accessibility to services for members, continuing to invest in new equipment and resources.

A new Incorporated Association, Hunter Volleyball Inc, was formed on 20 June 2021. The strategic goal of naming the organisation Hunter Volleyball was to support a long term vision for a large footprint for volleyball across the Hunter. Staged growth in Newcastle, expanded services in Lake Macquarie, and potential for services in Maitland were all factored into a regional association title and brand. Community members got creative through the association's logo design competition, and the legal entity now enables us to fully engage with funding bodies such as the Australian Sports Foundation, NSW Office of Sport, and commercial bodies willing to support community sport.



In August we resumed activity and started sprinting to deliver on everyone's expectations for returning to the court. Indoor social competitions ramped up with COVID Safe planning frameworks. We were overwhelmed by demand for junior participation programs, partially due to the popularity of Haikyu, and also the disruption to traditional sporting seasons which meant volleyball's year-round programming was an attractive alternative and we found a place in the hearts of a whole new audience. Beach programming featured two Newy Beaches adult social tournaments, and we captured indoor juniors over the Summer with a new format, the Junior Beach Summer Smash 4-a-side weekly social competition.

We gave the COVID-affected season a tremendous sign-off by hosting our Indoor Social competition finals on the Main Court at Newcastle Basketball stadium, featuring music, a BBQ, raffles, merchandise sales, live streaming for those watching from home, and end of season presentations in lieu of a separate function.

Details in the following report cover the period of the association following Incorporation on 19 June 2020 to the end of the association's first financial year, 31 December 2020.

Opportunities ahead of us in 2021 include engaging with grants and funding providers, consolidating delivery plans for representative programs, engaging regional networks to build participation and competition opportunities outside of metropolitan Sydney, and fine-tuning our governance practices to ensure that as we continue to expand we are well supported by effective systems and engaged volunteers.

Deep and personal thanks goes to: the volunteer Hunter Volleyball Committee which has been a tremendous resource, navigating the dizzying trajectory of activity of 2020; the growing network of volunteer coaches who rally each other and our athletes - young and old - to make volleyball a constant in an ever-changing environment; and to you our members who push us to lead your game in our region.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'MSlack-Smith', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Michelle Slack-Smith

SPRING SEASON (August – December) FINALS

The Newcastle City hub conducted a short winter season to get everyone back on court under a new COVID Safe regimen. After four months off court, it was essential to gradually return to physical activity while monitoring the ever-changing national health and pandemic management requirements.



An extended Spring season commenced in August with finals night featured end of year award presentations, due to the ongoing COVID restrictions on indoor gatherings and events at commercial premises. The Finals were livestreamed thanks to Brennan Coan, who generously offered to provide this service to share the night with those staying at home. Graeme Bowley and a team of willing volleyteers manned a BBQ and there were snags and drinks for hours as spectators settled into the action of the evening's program.

Hunter Volleyball recognised the contribution of a loyal and humble member whose contribution to volleyball in Newcastle and surrounds - for almost three decades - has helped to positively shape indoor and beach volleyball experiences for all around him.

The Rigby Shield was announced at the finals, in honour of Glen Rigby. The Shield will be awarded to the A Grade Most Valuable Player starting in 2021.



Spring Season Finals Night Main Court, Newcastle Basketball Stadium

A Grade

Gold: Bobs n Bills def Floor Play Elite

Bronze: Digbys def Pink Hitters



B Grade

Gold: Notorious DIG def Red Setters

Bronze: Beta Blockers def Amigos



C Grade

Gold Saints def Mixed Messages

Bronze Supersonics def Eyeballers



SPRING MIXED SOCIAL TOURNAMENT

Hunter Volleyball hosted its inaugural Spring Mixed Social tournament on 26-27 September at the Hunter Sports High School. Five teams competed over the weekend and enjoyed the rent-a-crowd spectators from the Junior Development Workshop taking place on the adjacent court.



The purpose of the tournament was to provide competition opportunities for regional associations and start to bring people back together socially. Due to COVID-19, we were prevented from hosting inter-regional teams this year.

After a very blustery and chilly start Saturday morning, the teams settled into the combined tournament draw, made plenty of song requests, and shared some laughs. The vibe was relaxed and comfortable, and games were a welcome relief from the months of pressures of COVID restrictions on work and play.

In the higher division, the Spice Girls took out top honours after defeating Gleny & the Jets, with Becky's Bouncers coming in third. In the social division, Red Setters defeated Nisshoku.

Plans for 2021 include hosting multiple social tournaments aimed at fostering regional playing networks.



Spice Girls & Becky's Bouncers



Red Setters & Nishhoku

Season Opening Mixed 3s

The first event of the Newy Beaches participation hub was held under glorious skies and perfect conditions. A small contingent hit Nobbys Beach for some social play. It was great to see some junior players stepping up for a hit on the sand as part of their ongoing exploration of both indoor and beach opportunities



Final Placings

- | | |
|-------------------------|------------------------|
| 1. Glen, Mark, Pierre | 5. Ulli, Anton, Sash |
| 2. Jordan, Pam, Tua | 6. Reza, Ali, Adel |
| 3. Alan, Ava, Jackson | 7. Mu, Peter, Michelle |
| 4. Daphne, Kurt, Nienke | |

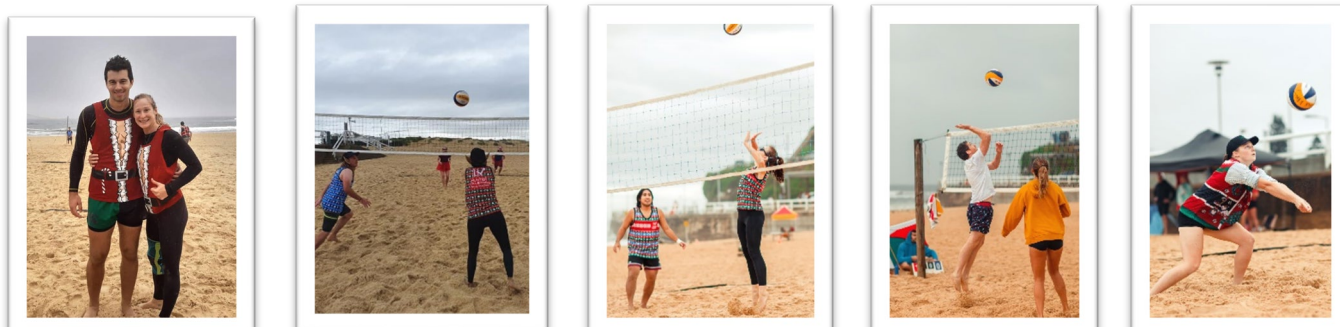


Christmas Mixed Social

Fourteen teams hit the sand on a rainy Sunday morning, and the variety of seasonal costumes were inspiring, including the new Ugly Xmas playing singlets! It was a tight tussle in the end with dominant pair Mu & Jordan accounting for Tua & Nienke in an entertaining final. It was great to welcome some of our Central Coast neighbours to the tournament, and we appreciate the continued camaraderie between Clubs!

Final placings:

- | | | |
|-----------------|------------------------|------------------|
| 1. Snowy Balls | 5. Kurt-Jordana | 10. Ulli-Sash |
| 2. Jingle Balls | 6. Glen & the Irishman | 11. Alan-Ava |
| 3. Noel-it-all | 7. Nutcrackers | 12. Walter-Aline |
| 4. Kim-Josh | 8. Nicole-Keano | 13. Ice Blockers |
| | 9. Peter-Layla | |



Junior Beach Summer Smash

What to do with juniors when they finish their indoor season? Take them to the beach for a social 4-a-side competition over summer. The eight week season held at picturesque Nobbys Beach courts on Sunday mornings was a huge hit! It was tremendous seeing the improvement in the juniors over such a short amount of time, and anticipating what they'll be like heading into the 2021 indoor season!

The season commenced 6th December 2020 and concluded 31st January 2021.

Girls 1st Spice Girls
2nd Sets on the Beach
3rd Defying Gravity

Boys 1st AJJA
2nd Bramish
3rd Flav's Crew

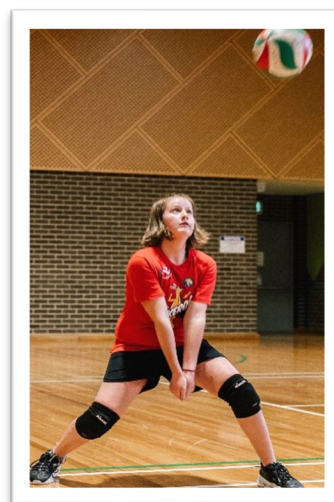


U15 SPIKEROOS PROGRAM

In Terms 3-4 we conducted the Spikeroos participation program at Hunter Sports High School, our participation hub in Lake Macquarie city. We met some fabulously excited U15 boys and girls and delivered the program at capacity 24 players per term.

This program gave participants the foundational skills and instruction in offense and defense positioning, and modified games by the end of the eight week program.

Our coaching team lead by Head Coach Danielle Tansu expanded during this time, continually supporting each other. At times, it was a sea of blue coach polos as everyone chipped in to encourage the kids!



U17 JUNIOR MIXED SOCIAL COMPETITION

Our inaugural U17 competition saw four coaches take on teams of mixed players who had just graduated from the Spikeroos program in the season prior. The competition was a fantastic introduction to weekly games, doing duty, and the thrill of taking match stats, recording blocks, serves, and 3-touch plays! It was encouraging seeing parents enjoying the spectacle of the game as well.



Coaches' Awards

The coaches presented awards to most Improved Player and player showing the greatest Sportsmanship throughout the season.

Congratulations to the following players for their efforts supporting their team and contributing to our positive and inclusive competition environment for juniors.

L-R: Carl, Maz, Lili, Phoebe, Raymond, Bailee
L-R: Brianna, Haylee



U17 Junior Social Competition Season Finals

- 1st Team 2 with Coach Dani
- 2nd Team 4 with Coach Kristy
- 3rd Team 3 with Coach Michael
- 4th Team 1 with Coach Jordan



WOMEN'S COMPETITION

The extended season women's competition at HSHS resumed with four teams battling it out. After a couple of Come & Try and team registration sessions we welcomed some new players and got down to business.

The season came down to the wire with Flamingos taking the trophy again thanks to consistent defense and increasingly unplayable attacks! Congrats to all for another season of good sports, and fun on and off the court.



Spring Season (August – December) Finals

Gold Flamingos def Sweet Digs

Bronze Outsiders def Cheetahs

